

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 452
By Purcell

A RESOLUTION to honor Dr. Jerry Sutton of Two Rivers Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the elected representatives of the state of Tennessee should honor those outstanding citizens who, as individuals called by God to Christian service, have sought to fulfill the will and purpose of Divine love by devoting their lives to the pastorate; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jerry Sutton, a minister of uncompromising love, stalwart devotion and deep religious conviction, is the pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, whether it be in the area hospitals, on the streets of Nashville, in the pulpit, or on television, Dr. Sutton has blessed thousands as he ministers in the name of Christ; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the University of South Alabama, Thomas Jerrell "Jerry" Sutton went on to obtain his Master of Divinity and Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he also taught from 1979 to 1982; and

WHEREAS, 1996 marks the tenth year that Dr. Sutton has blessed the congregation of Two Rivers Baptist Church with his sage counsel, strong biblical preaching and Christian character; and

WHEREAS, when Dr. Sutton arrived in Nashville in the Spring of 1986, Two Rivers Baptist recorded membership of 4,578 people and \$2.05 million in annual gifts; ten years later the church boasts a membership of over 6,300 people and gifts totaling \$5 million, an accomplishment in itself worthy of tremendous praise; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Sutton's leadership, the church has baptized more than 1,800 people and has given \$2.5 million to the cooperative program for Southern Baptists and \$1.7 million to the Love Offering for Jesus combined mission giving program; and

WHEREAS, to keep pace with the burgeoning membership, an expansion project was undertaken in 1993 that included expansion of the sanctuary and new adult and preschool education facilities; and

WHEREAS, with his natural talent and unsurpassed leadership ability, he has been called to hold various distinguished offices with the Tennessee and Southern Baptist Conventions; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sutton has served on the executive boards of both the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention, lending his time and talents to such committees as the Convention Ministries and Resolutions Committees of the SBC and the Long Range Planning Committee of the TBC; and

WHEREAS, ever one to shoulder the mantle of professional responsibility, Dr. Sutton has also served as a Director for the Family Institute, an affiliate of Focus on the Family, and continues to serve as a Trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, where he has given unreservedly of himself as Elected Vice Chairman of Trustees, Chairman of the Trustee Executive Committee, and current Chairman of the Trade Publishing Group; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Two Rivers Baptist Church will forever be indebted to Dr. Jerry Sutton for his wise teaching, inspirational preaching and evangelistic efforts, and will support him as he follows his God-directed mission: to build a "model" regional church for others to follow through a worshipping, caring, learning and influential community of believers; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his many accomplishments in a life given over to the will of God, Dr. Sutton is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his lovely wife, Fern, and their two daughters, Ashli and Hilary; and

WHEREAS, it is the task of this body to recognize those eminent citizens of this state who, in realizing God's purpose in their lives, have rendered an unparalleled dimension of service to this great state and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Dr. Jerry Sutton for his exemplary service to the ministry and commend him upon his tenth year of dedication and devotion to the congregation of Two Rivers Baptist Church, the Nashville community, and the state of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.